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WHY SHOULD CHICAGO BALK?

When we commented last week upon the action of government officials in Chicago in forbidding the publication, by local periodicals, and circulation through the mails, of any reproduction of the "Nude," by Richard Miller, awarded the first prize in the current exhibition at the Chicago Art Institute, we had not seen the catalog and did not identify the picture.

We are now surprised to find that the "Nude" is none other than the familiar canvas, which enjoyed peaceful prominence, in honor places, throughout several months of exhibition, first at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, and later at the Pa. Academy, two years ago, under the title of "La Toilette." The composition includes two figures, one of a nude woman dressing her hair, while another in a gorgeous kimono waits upon her. It is evident that Chicago Purists cannot stand for what Philadelphia and Washington view with equanimity.

THE ALTMAN COLLECTION.

The opening to the public, at the Metropolitan Museum this week, of the choice collection of pictures, porcelains, tapestries, etc., formed by the late Benjamin Altman and his gift to the Institution, and thus to the American public (for the Museum as the representative one of the country, is more than a New York institution), was not only the event of the week and of the art season thus far in America, but will excite interest even in battle raked Europe.

No such art gift—one so rich in quality, especially of its pictures, with the exception always of that of the heirs of Sir Richard Wallace to the City of London—has ever been made to a public art Museum in any country, and American art lovers and the American public are to be congratulated upon such an acquisition, and New York especially, on having had so public-spirited and generous an art patron as Mr. Altman.

The civic and local interest in the collection was emphasized by the increased public attendance at the Museum during the week, and a too large attendance of guests, in response to widely issued invitations, at the reception at the Museum, on Tuesday evening last, which badly congested the galleries where the collection is shown, and which with too brilliant and consequently unfortunate lighting, prevented any good inspection of the treasures.

We published last week a resumé of the Altman collection, and today give additional details elsewhere in our columns. The collection not only adds materially to the Museum collections as a whole, but greatly enhances the public educational value of that institution.

OBITUARY.

Richard Buckner Gruelle.

Richard Buckner Gruelle, a member of the Indiana colony of artists, whose death, at his home, 1349 West 28 St., Indianapolis, on Nov. 8, at the age of sixty-three years, was announced in the last issue of the ART NEWS, was born in Cynthiana, Ky., Feb. 22, 1851.

Mr. Gruelle returned from his summer home, near Norwalk, Conn., last June. Although primarily a landscape painter, of late years he devoted himself to marines, painting along the coasts of Maine and Massachusetts. Some of his best work was done at Gloucester, Mass.

Notable among his works are "The Passing Storm," which hangs in the Indianapolis Public Library, and "A Gloucester Inlet," in the collection at the John Herron Art Institute. Another painting "In Verdure Glad," is in the art gallery at Richmond, Ind.

Mr. Gruelle is survived by his widow, two sons, John B. Gruelle of Norwalk, Conn., and Justin Gruelle of New York, and one daughter, Mrs. Prudence Mazke, also of New York.

Susie R. Twichell.

Mrs. Susie R. Twichell, one of the leading china decorators in Western New York, and who taught large classes in that art for years, died November 12 in Erie, Pa., her home during the past four years. The deceased was twice married, her second husband being the late Henry S. Twichell, who for several years was an alderman in Buffalo.

Walter J. McNair.

Mr. Walter J. McNair, United States appraiser of limoges porcelains at this port, died Nov. 13 at his residence 202 Edgecombe Ave. He was 41 years old and had been 18 years in the customs service.

EXHIBITIONS NOW ON

Henri at Macbeth's.

Recent paintings, done in California, during the past summer, by Robert Henri, form a "one-man" show at the Macbeth Gallery, to Dec. 7. There is also shown a collection of portrait heads in terra cotta, by Janet Scudder.

Apparently the summer was a rich one for Mr. Henri, for in California he found an abundance of paintable material—Mexican, Indian, and Chinese types supplied sympathetic subjects for his brush, and the fifteen character portraits shown comprise the cream of his summer work, before it is broken up for out-of-town exhibitions.

Some of the portraits, particularly those of Chinese children are especially charming. In "Ma Chu" the subtlety of the head against the warmer background is very unusual, while others are treated with appreciation and distinction. "Tom Po Qui (Waters of Antelope Lake)," a handsome Indian, with a shock of characteristic black hair, is one of the best of the series.

While each portrait considered individually, is of undoubted interest, one finds a room full of them overpowering. In the mass of work unquestionably most able and typically virile, there is a lack of variety of color, and no great depth of feeling.

Miss Scudder's Portraits.

This collection of small portrait heads reveals a new phase of the art of Janet Scudder. While her heads of children are lacking in a sense of the big form, the portraits of fashionable women are piquante, chic, and charming, done in an eighteenth century manner, suggestive of the persuasive fluency of Houdon. Included in this collection are portraits of Mmes. Arthur Scott-Burden, John Carpenter, Leroy Edgar, James Eustis, and Miss Eleanor Lawson.

Childe Hassam at Montross Gallery.

Seventeen oils and 27 watercolors, for the most part recent works, by Childe Hassam are on exhibition at the Montross Gallery, No. 550 Fifth Ave., to Nov. 28. The art of Mr. Hassam is always an attractive one—for he has a rarely delicate and delicious color sense and palette, a dainty and deft touch, and a good knowledge of composition and arrangement of details. These qualities, with a refinement of feeling and sympathy with life and Nature in their more joyous moods—make his work, as a whole, worthy of attention, study and record.

To the writer, the artist is most happy in his renditions of summer seas and skies along the New England coast, or of its picturesque quaint harbors and coast towns, but there is a view of Capri in the present show, so truthful a transcription, of the exquisite sunlight and color, of that enchanted isle, as to evidence that the artist is equally at home in the portrayal of such scenes, when far afield. Some still lifes, a lovely interior, "Breakfast Room," "Central Park, April," and three young women's bust portraits among the oils are all strong and delicious in color. The "Water Lily," again beautiful and delicious in color, is marred by the introduction of a well painted but stiffly posed and drawn Nude. Why this painter, with all his skill can seemingly rarely make his women Nudes other than stiff and awkward, it is difficult to understand. His drawing is not usually bad or stiff in his clothed women's figures, as witness the delightful "Girl Reading."

The watercolors range in subject from Oregon to Paris. Some of the little French landscapes, in color, atmosphere and "sparkle" recall Boldini and De Nittis, and all, whether finished works or "impressions," are filled with sympathy and charm and are delightful in color.

Needham At Daniel Gallery.

Charles Austin Needham is exhibiting at the Daniel Gallery, 2 West 47 St., to Dec. 1. His handsome, low toned landscapes make an interesting variety in the series of more modern work which the gallery has been exploiting this season, and their dark romanticism, quiet color, and rich subjects, treated with professional skill and deep feeling, bespeak a painter of good taste and excellent accomplishment.

The MacDowell Club.

Paintings and sculpture by Karl Anderson, F. G. Applegate, D. Putnam Brinley, J. Mowbray-Clarke, Lydia Gibson, Charles Reiffel, Sidney Dale Shaw, and Allen Tucker form the current group exhibition at the MacDowell Club, 108 West 55 St., to Nov. 29. All these painters show the influence of the modern movement, and the gallery presents a gay appearance owing to the bright color, and bizarre design of their works. The sculpture is also affected by the "post-Rodin" tendency, and while not important is amusing and sometimes clever.

(Continued on page 5)

A TRUE COLLECTOR.

The Benjamin Altman collection was shown to members and friends Tuesday evening, at the Metropolitan Museum, at a largely attended Private View and Reception, and was opened to the public on Wednesday.

"Exactly how long ago Benjamin Altman developed the definite ambition to leave to his fellow-citizens an art collection of the first order cannot be stated," says the Evening "Post." "The fact remains that he had such ambition, and knowledge of this fact throws light on the character of the collection, which is neither strictly personal nor strictly expertized, but something of a subtle blend of both.

"As has been pointed out on other occasions, the collection is not of such magnitude as to be beyond the grasp of one collector, beyond the scope of his personal approval. Mr. Altman did not alone seek what was established in accordance with the world's most solid judgment, but also a standard of quality which should meet the demands of his own æsthetic insight. He did not belong to that rare class of amateurs who express themselves as definitely through what they collect as an artist does through that which he produces. In the back of his head he had another, almost detached view of his collection. It was to be a gift, the finest possible gift of its kind that he could make to his city.

Intent Upon Quality.

"He came to be known as a man intent upon quality. One famous portrait hung in his gallery a year before he finally returned it, satisfied, apparently, that whatever others might think, it was not in his eyes a necessary addition. It is hardly ten years since he first began to acquire the fifty-one paintings that now occupy two of the five galleries containing his collection. Had he lived ten years longer, he would, no doubt, have sifted it, and, precious though it is, have improved it.

"As a collector of paintings, Mr. Altman took the safe course, considering that he wished to leave a collection that would stand the test of time. He chose the giants, Rembrandt and Hals, Velasquez, Titian, Botticelli, and Mantegna, Holbein and Memling, and other men firmly accepted by the generations that have followed them. As far as humanly possible, he made sure of his collection. 'Authorities' have written and written again about every picture; but never mind, let us who go to see these works of art for the joy of it, leave behind the weighty and oftentimes laden 'Bode,' the subtle 'Berenson,' the scholarly Horne and studious Bushell, and go in, fresh from the sunlight, with eyes and mind open to receive and to enjoy.

"How rich the collection is may be seen still better by glancing from time to time at the Museum's other collections and observing how significantly they are affected by this new addition. Thirteen Rembrandts have been added. The National Gallery has eighteen Rembrandts and, counting the two in the Marquand collection and the two lent by Mr. Morgan, there are seventeen hanging in the Metropolitan today. All Holland has only thirty-three. There are only nine at the Rijks Museum and seventeen at the Mauritshuis, twenty in the Louvre, and eleven in the Wallace collection. The figures are set down as a superficial curiosity, and also as something to guard against.

"Frankly, it is better to forget the figures, for numbers have a sinister way of leading from finer things, particularly when used in connection with art museums. Even in the case of Rembrandt there is the possibility of being repetitious, and, had Mr. Altman lived longer, he might conceivably have replaced some of his Rembrandts with other works to widen the scope of the collection. He might have acquired Goya and El Greco to strengthen the Spanish school, or, sacrilegious thought, he might have chosen a splendid modern or two, a Manet and a Cézanne, for example, to let us see not only whence we came, but whither we are going, and how we came to the place we have arrived at. These are not merely idle speculations, but rather to suggest that numbers do not in the least count, that affiliated schools based on mere dates and nationalities do not count when compared with the one splendid fact that true art of all periods has in common a universal quality, and that the more light thrown on this fact by a collection, the more does that collection serve a living purpose.

Mme. Andree Lenique de Francheville gave a reception Monday afternoon for M. Brioux, of the Académie Française, at her studio, 53 West Thirty-ninth Street. There were about a hundred guests.

Kansas City is to have \$350,000 from the estate of Mrs. Mary Atkins to build an art museum, which the Fine Arts Institute is to manage.